



Changing the world ... One favor at a time

Pay It Forward is a concept from a novel about accepting the challenge to come up with a plan to change the world for the better - and putting that plan into action. For the first time in history, Americans have spent the last 18 months selecting a candidate to lead both the Democrat and the Republican parties. The world is changing! How are we changing WITH the world? What are WE willing to do to ensure we have leadership in our community? How are YOU willing to Pay It Forward to make the world a place we ALL want to live in?

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Interim
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As a society, are we running scared? What do we do about today's gas prices, the recession, global warming and the fear of losing everything we have worked for all our lives? These are the daunting questions we

face every day. With the weight of these problems on your shoulders you might not feel like you can make a difference, but YOU can!

The term Pay It Forward is centuries old but was revitalized with a recent novel and movie on the topic. Basically, the term means Changing the World...One Favor at a Time. To implement the concept each of us chooses three people for whom we will do a favor. When those people thank us and ask how they can repay our kindness, we tell them that instead of paying us...they should "pay it forward"...by doing favors for three more people and in turn asking those people to pay it forward. It may sound like a gift, but gifts

come with no conditions, no rules, no obligation to repay, and perhaps most importantly, no responsibility. Paying it forward, on the other hand, creates obligation, responsibility and purpose – three qualities any good leader possesses. As we search to identify and prepare the next generation of leaders this term seems essential in creating a brighter future for everyone.

The deaf and hard of hearing community is now at a LEADERSHIP CROSSROADS! We have been blessed to have generations of strong leaders that have worked tirelessly, often with little recognition or benefit to themselves, to make life better for all citizens of Kentucky. We have become so dependent upon these people that fewer leaders are stepping forward; creating a situation where the older generation is not able to enjoy the fruits of their labors because there is no one left that is "PAYING IT FORWARD."

The possible explanations for the leadership void are many. Perhaps yesterday's leaders spent so much time and energy pushing for the advantages we enjoy today, the generation that followed now takes

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Representative

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Alexander Graham Bell
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Reminder

The deadline to submit information and articles for the September 2008 edition of the Communicator is August 1, 2008.

Pay: Leadership begins with responsible actions

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these rights for granted. Perhaps a crucial step for developing leaders was missed, leading to a generation of people who have the seeds of leadership within, but do not know how to nurture and grow them. Have we become a society free to think about what is best for the individual, but not what is best for the community?

Whatever the cause, paying it forward is one way to remedy the current leadership void because the concept builds trust and leadership by starting at the personal level. The eventual payoff to society starts with one person, then hopefully spreads with each act of kindness. We must all look inward for the strength to reach out and lend a hand and stand up and use the lessons we have learned to become today's leaders, or teach the youth of today HOW to become leaders for the future. Paying it forward is not difficult, nor is it terribly time consuming. Instead, it teaches us to be service oriented and set good role models by our everyday actions. Paying it forward is not paying a financial debt; it is paying back to society what you have been given at one time or another during your life.

It could be an act of kindness as simple as opening a door to someone whose hands are full of groceries or providing encouraging words when a co-worker or loved one has had a bad day. The concept appeals to the goodness within each of us. Often we have no idea how much of a lasting impact our words and our actions may have on others, even if it is just a brief encounter. Everyone has the ability to care and paying it forward is driven by that spirit.

Joe DiMaggio, an American icon and a Hall of Fame center fielder for the New York Yankees for many years, always made sure he went out of his way to play his best, regardless of the situation or the score. When asked one day why he sacrificed his body for a meaningless play late in the season after the Yankees had already wrapped up the pennant, DiMaggio's explanation was simple:

"Because there is always some kid that might be seeing me for the first time. I owe him my best."

Really, don't we owe everyone our best? Every day of our lives, someone will be seeing us for the first time. Why wouldn't we want to make the best first impression we could? The best way to do that is through our actions, by paying it forward, without asking for anything in return except a better world for us all. Changing society is a daunting task but it is not impossible. All it takes are strong individuals who are not afraid to do and say the right things.

The person we pay it forward to today could be a community leader tomorrow. The concept is about reaching out for the betterment of society by giving of your time, expertise or advice. Ordinary people doing extraordinary things! It's an opportunity we simply cannot afford to pass up. Kentucky's leaders will not flourish unless they are given an environment to do so.

Are you willing to "PAY IT FORWARD?"

This challenge goes out to each of you to work within your family, your classroom, your friends, your office, your life...to pay it forward. Then write us and let us know how paying it forward has made a difference in your life or the life of another.

Email us at kcdhh@kcdhh.org or send us a letter to KCDHH, 632 Versailles Road, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Commission Staff

Virginia Moore, Interim Executive Director/Executive Staff Advisor

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Rachel Payne, Interpreter Referral Specialist
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Going green a way of life for KCDHH

Contrary to Kermit the Frog's famous quip, employees at the Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing find it quite easy to be green.

The KCDHH staff celebrated Earth Day on April 22 by making a number of environmentally friendly changes, both inside and outside of the office. The staff identified areas of the office, including files, where more efficient and environmentally friendly storage could ease conditions. Staff members transferred archived files to greener, more secure storage boxes and set aside older cardboard containers for recycling.

Later in the afternoon, staff members cleaned up trash on the KCDHH grounds, including the hillside separating the front and rear entrances of the building. The sight of leaf blowers, rakes and trash bags brought into focus the importance of the day's events. Not only were employees helping to clean the environment around them but it also fostered a sense of teamwork among agency employees.

"I feel that anything that we do as a



Rachel Morgan, Executive Staff Interpreter at KCDHH, helps help clean up the hillside outside the office as part of the agency's Earth Day celebration.

staff, we always do as a team," said Rachel Payne, Interpreter Referral Specialist at KCDHH. "It doesn't surprise me that we work well as a team. Our Commission is so strong because already everything we do for the

community, we do it together. None of us here, we might be specialized in individual programs, but we all work together. We have really grown from working with each other."

At a later staff meeting, KCDHH employees made suggestions for long-term environmental impact which will make the office greener and save money in the process. Some of these suggestions adopted by the staff include turning off computers and monitors when leaving the office for the weekend instead of simply logging off and turning off lights in all rooms that are unoccupied. The staff also adopted the idea of using scrap paper whenever possible for informal interoffice communication.

"Going green is not just turning off the light bulb. It is attitudinal," said Virginia Moore, Interim Executive Director at KCDHH. "It's 10 people here at the Commission. The impact is 10 people go from here to their homes and from their homes out. It starts with one and they influence 10 and it goes from there."

Kentucky do-not-call list undergoes minor change

Kentucky residents who do not want to be contacted by telemarketers may still put their name on the list but will encounter a slight change in the process.

As of February 2008, the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has taken responsibility for maintaining the list of telephone customers who do not want to receive calls from telemarketers. The job of compiling the do-not-call list was originally handled by the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC).

Under a bill passed by the 2007 Kentucky General Assembly, names already on the do-not-call list were transferred last year to the FTC's national registry. With that change, Kentucky customers wishing to sign up for the do-not-call list in the future must contact the FTC, either online at www.donotcall.gov or by calling toll-free, 1-888-382-1222 (TTY 866-290-4236), from the number they wish to register. In addition to a home phone, in order to receive protection from telemarketers, consumers will also have to register each separate line. This includes a TTY line, a fax line or a cellular phone number.

A link to the FTC site is available on the Kentucky Office of

Attorney General's do-not-call Web site, www.nocall.ky.gov.

PSC Chairman Mark David Goss noted that the do-not-call list has been the subject of a number of rumors in recent months.

"Contrary to some of the information circulating in cyberspace, telemarketers are not about to receive unrestricted access to wireless phones," Goss said.

Goss also noted that there is no truth to the rumor that the FTC will begin removing numbers from the list if they were registered more than five years ago.

Those with complaints about possible violations of Kentucky or federal do-not-call laws may file with the Kentucky Office of the Attorney General (www.nocall.ky.gov or 866-877-7867) or the FTC (www.donotcall.gov or 888-382-1222).

Telecommunications providers in Kentucky must notify their customers of the do-not-call provisions through bill inserts, bill messages or the customer guides in their telephone directories.

A brochure explaining the do-not-call law may be found on the PSC's Web site, www.psc.ky.gov. The case number is 2007-00506.

A timeless tradition continues on August 30 in Louisville

The Kentucky Commission on the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and its partner Knowledge Center on Deafness are proud to produce our eighth DeaFestival-Kentucky, held August 30, 2008, at the Kentucky Center in Louisville between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

Several new and diverse performers, including backgrounds such as traditional dance and hip-hop, will delight and entertain us!

The Kentucky Center will be buzzing with excitement as festival goers experience unique and professional talent. Whether it is a first-time trip to DeaFestival-Kentucky or the eighth, festival goers never fail to leave without a smile and applause for what they have witnessed.

So what makes DeaFestival-Kentucky such a special event? Why does DeaFestival-Kentucky even exist? With endless entertainment options, rapidly advancing technology giving rise to the power of the individual, it is one of the few places where the sense of community still exists.

That learning that exists as all groups – deaf and hard of hearing – come together and share art, theatre, dance and stories, is a rare opportunity in today's busy world. But DeaFestival-Kentucky is more than just fun and games – it is about understanding and making an impact. For children to meet a deaf doctor or see and feel the tools of a deaf veterinarian, or experience the joy of a deaf dance troupe is an opportunity whose impact will be measured for years to come. The seed to tomorrow's leaders could easily sprout with DeaFestival-Kentucky 2008.

DeaFestival-Kentucky is once again partnering with WorldFest for a weekend of food, fun and performances with an international flair on the grounds of the Kentucky Center and Belvedere. Plan to attend DeaFestival-Kentucky 2008 on August 30 and stay for the weekend as WorldFest runs Friday through Sunday. The Galt House, the official hotel of DeaFestival-Kentucky, is located just one block away from all the action and is providing discount rooms for the weekend. Visit www.deafestival.org for information, including lodging.

As always, DeaFestival-Kentucky is FREE to all! So... set your calendars for a weekend of fun with DeaFestival-Kentucky and WorldFest. Interpreters will be available to assist you as you walk through the Elizabeth "Cookie" Williams Artist Studio and enjoy the performances, such as Spotlights and the children's program, "Around the World in 80 Minutes." We can't wait to see you there!





DeaFestival-Kentucky schedule

Children's Program

"Around the World in 80 Minutes"

10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Come and join us for a walk around the world with Peter Cook, one of America's favorite deaf entertainers, in addition to Keith Wann and Crom Saunders. The lesson in world cultures, made possible through DeaFestival-Kentucky's partnership with WorldFest, will take children through many lands of food and culture, from Japanese cuisine to authentic African, European and South American traditions. While any trip around the world is sure to be filled with adventure and mystery, students of this voyage will get a cultural exchange they will not soon forget!

Main Stage

"Spotlights"

Noon - 6 p.m.

The Main Stage is held in the famous Bomhart Theatre where "lights, camera and magic" will happen. Nationally renowned entertainer Pinky Aiello will be the emcee of ceremonies. Among the featured performers scheduled to appear are the Anderson Twins, Sammy Ruiz, Rosa Lee Gallimore, Monique Holt, C.J. Jones, Sean Forbes and a Hip Hop dance group. In addition to the featured performers, the popular program, "Dare to Dream," which made its debut at DeaFestival-Kentucky 2006, returns with more deaf professionals and stories that are both informative and inspiring.

Elizabeth "Cookie"

Williams Artist Studio

10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

The Elizabeth "Cookie" Williams Artist Studio showcases many local and national artists and their beautiful art pieces. National artists such as Chuck Baird, Dick Moore, Iris Aranda and Tony McGregor, as well as local artists Jack Cochran and Jessie Dunahoo will also display their works. Many others contribute their own unique styles to the festival. **DON'T MISS THE SHOW!**

Exhibitors and vendors will be located outdoors on the Belvedere, along with WorldFest. WorldFest is a celebration of international food and culture, attracting more than 60,000 visitors annually. In addition to dance and music, the festival features the Parade of Culture. This year marks the second time DeaFestival-Kentucky has partnered with WorldFest.

STAY FOR THE WEEKEND

Among the attractions within two miles of DeaFestival-Kentucky on Labor Day weekend are:

- WorldFest
- Muhammad Ali Museum
- Ironman Louisville triathlon
- Louisville Slugger Museum
- Frazier International History Museum
- Louisville vs. Kentucky college football



For more information and updates about DeaFestival-Kentucky, go to www.deafestival.org

Rolling up our sleeves and working together

Michelle Niehaus, LCSW

*Statewide Coordinator for Deaf Services
Division of Mental Health, Mental Re-
tardation, & Substance Abuse*

Margaret Wheatley defines as leader as “anyone willing to help.” In the past three months, this has become a truism as again and again I’ve seen people gathering to improve the lives of those they care about – and having fun while doing it.

Our own Advisory Council chair, Wilton McMillan, led groups of children at the Owensboro and Louisville “Hands Alive!” events designed to expose children with hearing loss to adult role models. New board member Craig Lemak demonstrated his skill connecting with children who had various needs. Observing nationally known storyteller Ben Bahan interacted with elementary school children unable to sign their name or answer basic questions spelled out the dire need of early intervention and family outreach services to prevent mental health issues in the future.

Kentucky School for the Deaf staff invited me to consult on how to best serve several children with special needs - and then they asked me to serve up some volleyball skills as we played with the elementary school dorm students.

Our signing therapists, Erin Schilling, Lindsey Williams (both at Seven Counties Services, Inc.) and Laura Burg tried their hands at artwork during our first quarterly therapists’



Above, Erin Schilling, Sharon Gardner and Lindsey Williams show off their artistry skills at Creative Diversity, an art studio for people with and without disabilities.

retreat. Joined by Sharon Gardner, our Gallaudet Social Work intern, each created a piece on what “Art, Advocacy, and Accessibility” meant to them. Led by an artist at Creative Diversity Studio in Louisville, the workshop was an opportunity for the clinicians to explore their creative side and have fun. Since Deaf Specialists are often isolated in their agencies, the retreats provide an opportunity to connect, share information, relax and be exposed to new ideas in the field.

Isolation and lack of enough direct service providers continued to be themes in the Community Roundtable Discussions held in Bowling Green, Owensboro, Corbin, and Northern Kentucky. Coordination of the meetings was often done by Rehabilitation Counselors for the Deaf (RCD’s) from Vocational Rehabilitation. Sherry West, Laura Hermann, Joe Scott,

and Carol Leonhart continually show their commitment to seeing the holistic needs of VR consumers and strive to collaborate to create consumer-driven services. Invaluable input from participants allowed us to begin developing regionally based services and continue the work through Community Stakeholder groups.

Rolling up our sleeves and working together is critical to seeing real change in our community. I challenge you to get involved. Among the ways to help are:

- Participate in a Community Stakeholder Group that developed from our Roundtables?
- Volunteer to visit individuals who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing in hospitals or institutions in your community
- Mentor or befriend a person with mental health, substance abuse, or developmental disabilities

People of all ages benefit from TAP’s equipment distribution

While KCDHH has been helping consumers of all ages bridge the communication gap through new technology for some time now, the lesson learned recently is, when it comes to age, the Telecommunications Access Program knows no limits.

One of the recipients of a CAPTel is

Robley Rex, a 105-year-old Louisville resident. Rex, Kentucky’s only remaining veteran of World War I and one of less than 200 nationwide, received his CAPTel from KCDHH in May 2005 and continues to enjoy the service he has received from it.

Rex, who was featured in a Louisville

Courier-Journal article for his volunteer work in August of 2007, recently received another honor. He was featured on the Smucker’s Jar on NBC’s Today show when he celebrated his 105th birthday on May 4.

The reception hall at VFW Post 8639 in Okolona has been named in Rex’s honor.

Join us for a weekend of fun!



DeafFestival Kentucky

Partnering with

WorldFest for

food, fun and

performances with

an international flair

The Kentucky Center

Saturday,

August 30, 2008



www.deafestival.org



KCDHH

632 Versailles Road

Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

An agency of the Kentucky Education Cabinet

Calendar of Events

JUNE

June 23rd - July 18th

Clerc Center Summer Institute at Gallaudet - Washington, D.C.

JULY

July 7th - 11th

49th Biennial NAD Conference - New Orleans, LA

July 17th - 19th -

Midwestern Regional Black Deaf Advocates Biennial Conference -
Louisville

July 25th -

118th KCDHH Commission Meeting - Frankfort

AUGUST

August 1st - 2nd

KSD Alumni Association 36th annual Picnic Weekend - Danville

August 5th - 8th

Diagnostics and Amplification for Infants and Toddlers Conference -
Mesa, Arizona

August 30th

DeaFestival-Kentucky

For more information on these and other events, please visit the KCDHH Web Bulletin Board at <http://www.kcdhh.ky.gov/home/buttetin.html>